The next issue of CHALLENGE will appear in three weeks, after which we will follow our regular bi-weekly schedule.

PERIODICO EN ESPAÑOL ADENTRO

CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM • LUCHE POR EL COMUNISMO • PLP

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

volume 43 no. 1 January 05, 2011 suggested donation $.50

Students, Profs Battle CUNY Bosses' Tuition Hike



Storm College Senate Meeting

NEW YORK CITY, December 2 — Nearly 100 students and faculty members at the City University of NY (CUNY) held an indoor rally to protest next term's threatened tuition increases and then invaded a College Senate meeting to denounce the hikes.

A student leader gave an impassioned, detailed speech explaining the racist nature of the hikes. Thirty-five years ago CUNY tuition was free. Now the majority of CUNY students are black, Latino and Asian, and because of long-standing racism in employment and wages are in an even worse position to pay this exorbitant tuition.

The speaker called on his fellow students to give more leadership in fighting the many problems that the working class faced.

A faculty member told the crowd that the PSC union (Professional Staff Congress of CUNY) was 100% behind the students' struggle and related their struggle to students' fight-back worldwide. He asked those present to say what they felt. At first it was quiet, but then it was like a dam bursting.

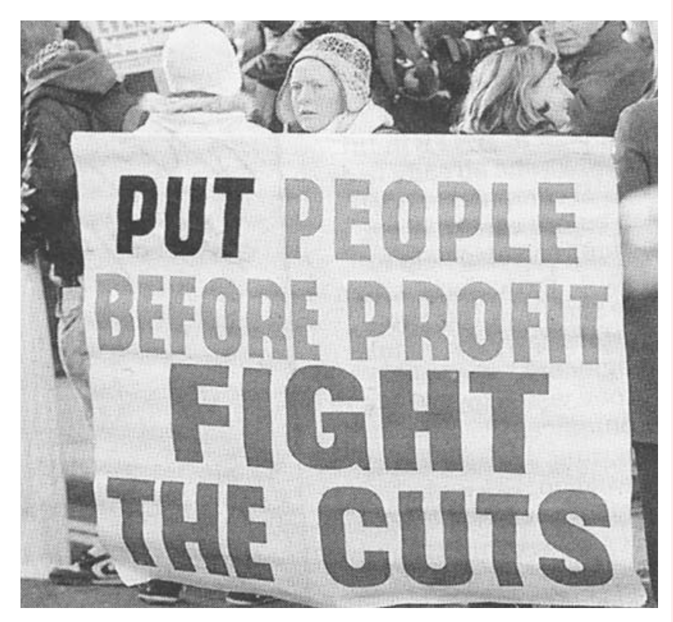
Student after student angrily condemned the injustice of ever-increasing tuition and of the deteriorating physical conditions on campus.

Plans were made for another meeting next week. When the student leader explained that the administration made it difficult for him to e-mail announcements to the entire student body, the crowd shouted "let's go talk to him now!"

We were told that at that very moment a "College Senate" was being held upstairs. As we surged towards the stairs, the chief of campus security said we couldn't go up to the meeting. But 50 angry students went around him as he called on his walkie-talkie for back-up.

Upstairs inside the Senate meeting the student leader blasted the planned tuition hikes — which are city-wide — as well as protesting the increase in local campus fees. While some had told him to "take it easy" and "be quiet," he said he would never be silent in the face of injustice. A veteran faculty member rose to report that the faculty council on campus had voted against the hikes. The administrators remained silent.

We will continue to build a fighting alliance of students, faculty and staff. Letters of support have been received from as far away as Haiti (see PLP website for full text of statement). (More next issue.) ✪



Students in Ireland fight back against the cuts.



Confront Board of Trustees

NYC, November 15th – Outside, students and faculty were chanting, "Let us in!" and "Education is a right! Fight! Fight! Fight!; inside, the Board of Trustees of the City University of New York (CUNY) began a "public" hearing on the proposed CUNY budget which included increases in tuition.

This is the undeniable reality of our society: CEOs, bankers and politicians, none of whom feel the crushing reality of this racist capitalist system, make decisions that consign thousands or millions of workers to more and more racism and suffering. We don't need these blood-sucking parasites! The Board of Trustees meeting was the latest opportunity for the revolutionary vision of PLP to stand as an antidote to capitalism and its never-ending crises, war and racism.

A left-wing professor sharply attacked the trustees as being sneaky and underhanded. Why did they announce the planned hikes just a few days before the hearing? Why was the hearing in such a small room? If they wanted to maximize participation, why didn't they have the hearing in a large venue on one of the campuses?

He explained that Greece, England, Ireland, France, and the U.S. were all capitalist countries facing economic crises where the bosses were trying to make the working people pay and where students and workers were fighting back. "When you call for taxing the super rich, some people say, 'Oh, he's advocating class war!'

"Well yes, that's what I am talking about — class war. Because right now, class war is being waged against us — the working class. But merely taxing the rich will not end the fundamental exploitation of capitalism. CUNY will still be underfunded, our students will still live in a racist, sexist society and the bosses will still get to decide how we live. These aspects of capitalism are un-reformable. We have seen the shattered promises of capitalist reform. Workers need revolution instead."

After his testimony, chants of "No tuition hikes, Free CUNY" broke out. Other speakers rose and attacked the trustees. A student asked Chancellor Goldstein, "Didn't you receive a free education when you went to CUNY? All we are asking for is what you got already — a free quality education. Other speakers attacked Goldstein for getting a $45,000 salary increase.

While all this was going on, copies of CHALLENGE and a Party leaflet were being distributed outside and inside the hearing. The Party leaflet explained how the Trustees were businessmen appointed by politicians, and while we must fight hard against tuition increases or any attack against the working class, revolution was the only solution for working-class people. The racist parasites who feed on the mostly black and Latino CUNY students and the anger that is rising in the blood of the students are tremendous opportunities to raise this revolutionary possibility. Next semester and onward we will work to expand these possibilities. ✪

Rulers' Wiki-Circus Marks U.S. Clash with Iran, China, Russia, North Korea

Workers can't count on ruler-orchestrated "exposés" like Wikileaks to somehow reform the profit system that creates wars without end. Wikileaks is trying to deceive people into believing that "independent" or "alternative" media can expose the capitalist class and somehow organize against it.

Wikileaks' hackers and their now jailed, phony rebel chief Julian Assange have no intention of attacking U.S. imperialism. If they had:

• They would never have chosen the ultra-Establishment New York Times — and its European equivalents — to edit and publish their huge number of 250,000 "sensitive" State Department cables.

• And this gives the Times and its allies the opening to use the leaks to urge stepped-up U.S. military measures against growing — especially nuclear — threats to U.S. imperialism.

• The leaks also help Obama and the imperialists he serves to shift the spotlight from the disastrous economy onto foreign policy.

Here are some Wiki warnings:

• "A batch of leaked U.S. diplomatic cables released this week lend details to long-suspected nuclear cooperation between [Chinese protectorates] North Korea and Burma, suggesting that hundreds of North Koreans were…working at a covert military site deep in the Burmese jungle."(Washington Post, 12/11)

• *"One of the leaked cables…said the 19 North Korean BM-25 missiles, based on a Russian design known as the R-27, might give Iran the 'building blocks' for producing long-range missiles." (Bloomberg 11/29)*

• *"Britain's Guardian newspaper, citing U.S. diplomatic cables obtained by WikiLeaks, reported…a decision to draft contingency plans to defend the ex-Soviet NATO members Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania [from invasion by Russia] had been taken secretly this year at the urging of the United States and Germany." (Reuters, 12/09)*

• *"The United States tried to stop delivery of Russian anti-aircraft missiles to Venezuela in 2009 amid concerns it could pass them on to Marxist guerrillas in Colombia or Mexican drug gangs, The Washington Post said on Sunday, citing diplomatic cables from WikiLeaks." (Reuters, 12/12)*

Ruling-class publishers are also spinning the cables to blame U.S. genocide in Iraq on an evil Bush-Cheney-Halliburton cabal instead of the increasing profit needs of the biggest U.S. capitalists. Germany's Spiegel Online is the English-language affiliate of Der Spiegel, a favored Assange outlet.

Spiegel has close ties to liberal U.S. imperialists. Speigel Online boasts that it's "valued by policy-makers in…Washington, D.C." And Spiegel publishes Harvard Business School's magazine in German.

On December 6, its article…"A Lot of Blood for Little Oil," [said]: "Contrary to what many people believe, the Iraq war provided few advantages for the U.S. oil industry…. Diplomatic cables show…competitors to the Americans…often did better in the country. Only one U.S. company truly profited: Halliburton."

Wiki Accuses Bushites, Absolves Exxon of Iraq Carnage

But the actions of Exxon Mobil, the chief beneficiary of the U.S. war machine's slaughter of millions of Iraqis, prove Spiegel's "little oil" line a deliberate lie: "U.S. major ExxonMobil and its partners [mainly Anglo-Dutch Shell] raised their production plateau target from Iraq's West Qurna oilfield to 2.825 million barrels per day (mbd) after adding new reserves to the area covered by their original development contract, an Iraqi oil official said." (Reuters, 11/28) Those 2,825,000 barrels are more than oil-rich Kuwait or Venezuela or Nigeria pump daily.

U.S. war-makers used hundreds of thousands of GIs (who never enlisted to save Big Oil) and high-paid mercenaries to help Exxon win and hold the largest of Iraq's six giant fields. The country's projected total output stands at 12mbd, greater than Saudi Arabia's current production. (This officially-proclaimed total is perhaps unreachable.) Exxon's contract, signed in January, runs for 20 years. And Obama will keep the troops there to carry out that mission.

What Did Wikileaks Omit?

Besides distorted Wikileaks and outright Wikilies, there are glaring Wiki-omissions. Since at least since 2005, the State Department, supposedly under Assange's microscope, has held extensive negotiations with Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India about U.S.-funded construction of the gas pipeline TAPI, named for these countries it will traverse. But Wikileaks never mentions TAPI, although the four Asian nations inked the deal for it on December 11.

Meanwhile bloodshed is worsening along its Afghan route through Kandahar and Helmand, always the focus of U.S.-U.K.-led operations. Protecting TAPI will require permanent, massive U.S. and allied military presence there. Nor did Assange's crew criticize U.S. gunpoint diplomacy with Turkmen bosses regarding the pipeline last month. It led TAPI's gas suppliers to openly reject Russian Gazprom's offer to participate in TAPI, while they celebrated the re-opening of Exxon's office in their capital, Ashgabat.

Now the same U.S. and U.K. governments that practice mass murder in Iraq and Afghanistan — aiding the media barons — are trying to make a martyr of Assange, thereby assuring him a wider public following. Assange sits in London's Wandsworth Prison, accused of rape charges his increasingly numerous supporters call false.

Obama's Attorney General Eric Holder threatens to try Assange for espionage. But his lawyer, Mark Stephens, who sports impeccable liberal imperialist credentials (see below), is saying Assange went to jail willingly.

According to Stephen's firm's website, Stephens "has run and taught courses for" the World Bank and the Open Society Institute. This same U.S.-dominated World Bank imposes worker-impoverishing "austerity budgets" on developing countries to ensure repayment to lenders like J.P. Morgan Chase. And it's billionaire currency swindler George Soros's Open Society that tries to buy the election of pro-U.S. politicians, from Belarus to Burma.

Only Working Class's Communist Revolution Can Destroy War-Making Profit System

The Progressive Labor Party rejects the deadly political error that says our class can have capitalist allies like Assange and his pals. PLP's goal is to spread our ideas throughout, and participate in, the mass movement — in effect, making the unions, factories, schools, churches, communities and the military "schools for communism," linking their class struggles to the need to bury the capitalists through communist revolution.

Yes, the war-makers must be exposed, but from a purely working-class point of view, with the ultimate goal of destroying capitalism itself and establishing a society without bosses and profits, run by and for the working class. ✪

OUR FIGHT

✯Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

✯Only the dictatorship of the working class — communism — can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

✯Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

✯While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

✯Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. Everyone will share in society's benefits and burdens.

✯Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit black, Latino, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

✯Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women — sexism — and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

✯Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✯Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

✯Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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CHALLENGE/DESAFIO (ISSN 0009-1049) published bi-weekly by Challenge Periodicals. 1 issue $.50. One Year: $15. Six months: $10. Send address changes to CHALLENGE Periodicals, GPO Box 808 Brooklyn, NY 11202, January 05 2011. Volume 43, No. 1

Why Articles Are Not Signed

The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual. While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

Learning from Class Struggle
United Fight vs. Jim Crow Segregation at Brooklyn High School

BROOKLYN, NY — "They [the Department of Education — DoE] are segregating kids again. Just like the Jim Crow laws. Blacks and whites were separated: different schools and different water fountains. There's barely a difference."

One student wrote this in response to reading the last issue of CHALLENGE, highlighting the sharp struggle in our school. The truth is that under capitalism, the school system will only serve the needs of the racist bosses. The only way that we can truly serve our students and community is by getting rid of the bosses and their schools. Then, under a communist society, we will have true education for our students.

The DoE has released an "Educational Impact Statement" which lays out its plans to put in a new selective school in our building. While they claim they want to provide "all students" with a "high quality education," the academic requirements of the new school will leave behind most low-income black and Latino students, especially special education students and English-language learners.

They contradict themselves by saying that the building is under-utilized while eliminating two of the middle schools in the building to make room for the new Brooklyn Millenium School.

The DoE told us there will be $3-5 million in capital improvements made to the building, but only if the new school comes in. That sum seems like a lot, but the building is in such disrepair that it would take much more money than that to make the building clean and safe.

Some parents and teachers are skeptical that the new school will attract enough white students, since middle-class parents have been made to fear sending their students through metal detectors to a majority black and Latino building.

There is talk about taking out the metal detectors to attract more students to the new school. One student wrote, "Why take out the metal detectors now that the new school is coming? We have been asking for this for years. I find that really racist. They treat us like criminals with the metal detectors."

Since last issue, we have had a combined union meeting with all the schools in our building and one parent meeting. As we go to press, we are preparing for a follow-up parent meeting and a debate panel presentation and rally.

At our parent meeting, we had a slightly larger turnout than last meeting. We definitely need to work harder on building a deeper base with parents and students. We have many things to do before the public hearing — write to the media, get as many facts as possible, but mostly organize, organize, organize!

At our combined union meeting, we discussed different issues in the struggle, and why we need to fight back. One comrade rightly pointed out the historical example of how communists fought evictions by moving those evicted back into their apartments during the 1930s U.S. Depression.

The union meeting brought out more teachers than our regular fight-back meetings, and we heard from more people. The union district representative called himself a union flunkie, and in the doublespeak that union hacks and bosses know how to use so well, described in the same breath why we should vote for politicians and why politicians do nothing for us.

Many teachers have said our campus might not win this fight to keep out the new school. One teacher said it best: "We might not win this, but we have learned much through struggle. The silver lining is that fighting beside and with parents, students, and fellow teachers has forced us to get to know everyone in a more authentic way." This non-communist teacher was expressing our belief that revolution is born out of class struggle.

In the upcoming weeks, we need to continue to build with parents, students, and people in the community. We need to make sure that CHALLENGE is the paper of record in our struggle, our flag. We need to introduce as many people as possible to the Party's ideas.

Through this struggle, the Party is becoming a real presence in our school, with more students, teachers and parents exposed to communist ideas. "Is this our school newspaper?" one debater asked when a Party member distributed CHALLENGE at a debate team practice.

Our actual school newspaper just published its inaugural issue full of articles about the situation. The students and teachers responsible for the newspaper were not afraid to address the racism of the DoE's plans. The articles have been picked up by neighborhood blogs, drawing both racist and supportive comments, expanding the debate.

Our big chance to stand up in unity against the bosses' plans is coming soon. The DoE is required to hold public hearings before making changes to any schools, and our's is on January 11. While we know that these hearings usually serve as rubber stamps for decisions which have already been made, we are planning to attend in full force, parents, teachers, students and community members, to fight back. Even if the DoE follows through on its plans, we will have learned, and hopefully grown, a lot from this struggle. ✪

Join us at the public hearing. Show the racist Department of Education that we won't take this lying down!

Date: January 11th, 2011

Time: 6pm

Location: JohnJay Campus, 237 7th Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11217

Harlem Workers, Students
Expose Columbia U. Phony Job 'Offer'



NEW YORK CITY, NY, December 2 — Yesterday about 50 Harlem activists, local church members and Columbia students picketed the fake Harlem Columbia Employment Office on the coldest day of the year. That office, which is never staffed by more than one person, suddenly had four staff sitting cozily inside while demonstrators chanted loudly outside. Speakers included a parishioner from the local church where PLP has worked for years, with other church members making up a good part of the marchers. She spoke eloquently about the difficulty of finding enough work, all with low pay, to support her child.

Wealthy Ivy League Columbia University has promised 7,000 new jobs for residents in West Harlem which it is destroying in order to expand. Several years ago they set up this Employment Office right off 125th Street. However, if you walked in there, all you got was permission to use their computer to look for jobs elsewhere. The experience was the same for high school dropouts and those with college degrees and work histories. Now there is massive construction going on, but no one from Harlem is working there or being trained to do so.

This blatant disregard for the needs of the neighborhood shows the racism of Columbia's plans and their role in capitalist society. The job of such an elite university is to perpetuate the ideas which keep workers believing in the system and to create the war technologies that allow the U.S. ruling class to maintain its imperialist hold on other parts of the world. Of course, when planning their expansion, they have been willing to force out the working-class black and Latino residents of the neighborhood. Capitalism relies on this kind of racism to control workers.

For a decade, community activists and a small number of Columbia students have been organizing to stop the expansion. For years they relied on working within community boards and other political structures to come up with plans to make the expansion fair to the community, but in the end all the political bodies, politicians and courts betrayed them.

Now the tactics have shifted to focusing on building a bottom-up movement with more focused demands, primarily jobs. Preventing the building of a level 3 biodefense lab right on 125th Street and preserving affordable housing are other issues.

The struggle of comrades in the group and their own experiences playing within the system's rules have helped bring this change in outlook. We will need to build an ongoing struggle in order to win any victories. But most importantly, we will need to win our friends to the long-term outlook of destroying the whole racist system. The result of the long work in the local church was plainly on view as new activists stepped out in the cold. ✪

Mass Action Needed:
AC Transit Union 'Victory' Cuts Workers' Pay

OAKLAND, CA, December 13 — The results of the "neutral" arbitration between AC Transit (mass transit in SF Bay Area) and ATU 192 have come back: major sacrifices for bus drivers, mechanics, and maintenance workers. Topping the long list is an unprecedented 6% pay CUT in the first year of the contract. Also, the company will no longer pay workers for the first day off when they call in sick. Sick workers will have to come in to work, if they can't afford to miss a day's pay. For parents who are holding a whole family together on one paycheck — and there are many among us — this is blackmail.

These are the results of the supposedly "neutral" arbitrator. But how can the process be called "neutral" when transit workers have to bail out the transit agency? We didn't cause the crisis, the banks did! Yet the banks and corporations don't have to pay extra, even though the transportation WE provide adds value to THEIR real estate and allows THEIR businesses to function.

Without a Fight

At a special meeting in July, the International union representative said, "I believe AC management is scared to go to arbitration." Scared?! Management wasn't "scared" of arbitration. They only opposed arbitration because they knew the union leadership was not prepared to strike. They punked the union — and our President had the nerve to "thank" the arbitrator! As recently as November's union meeting, the local President still called the Arbitration a "victory."

Many drivers say, "What they're trying to do is break the union."

OK, question: Who needs to "break" the union, when management is already able to cut our pay without a fight? The union is broken already — from the International on down.

Out of the Woodwork

Now that the damage is done, workers are upset. Most of the blame is placed on our local union leadership, and many workers want to replace them. In this situation, people start to pop out of the woodwork, and talk about running for union office.

These people have organized nothing over the past several years. No protests, no newsletters, no nothing. Many don't even go to union meetings. Some are ex-union officials who have been in hibernation since they got booted out last time, and want to hold office again. Others are people who like to pretend like they have all the answers, and if only they were president, they would be "smart" enough to "get things done."

Need a Movement

As much as people might want to believe that electing the right person could solve our problems, what we need is a mass movement. The history taught in school in this capitalist society tells us that the leader is everything, the masses are nothing. But communists don't buy it — we know that masses of people make history, especially through protests, strikes and revolutions.

Instead of focusing on who the next President will be, we need to get started building a movement that involves rank-and-file union members. We have a lot of work to do: produce a newsletter, protest at the Board Meetings for the re-hire of our laid-off co-workers, and prepare for future job actions. This is going to be a hard, long process. But it's the only way for transit workers to get a taste of the real power that we have: power in numbers, power to shut down transportation, power to shut down the capitalist economy. That's a lot of power!

Workers power' is a "dirty little secret" that the bankers and CEO's don't want us to find out about because once we do, we might use it to make a revolution! That's why Progressive Labor Party is organizing a Political Economy class in the Bay Area. Any transit workers who would like to understand more about how capitalism works are invited. Once we are conscious of our true strength as a working class, nothing can stop us! ✪

D.C. Gentrification vs. Homeless AIDS Victims

WASHINGTON, D.C. — PL'ers joined with Metropolitan Washington Public Health Association (MWPHA), Global AIDS protestors, and DC Fights Back to protest against the consequences of gentrification on workers with HIV. They memorialized the 1.3 million who died this year of AIDS. Gentrification is eliminating more affordable housing.

It is a vicious cycle — homeless people are more likely to be ill and the ill are more likely to be homeless. The conditions of homelessness, including under-nutrition, no access to clean water and bathrooms, can cause these chronic health problems. People with HIV are more likely to be homeless because of unaffordable housing and cost of medical care.

In D.C., 1,000 HIV/AIDS patients and 25,000 homeless people are on the waiting list for affordable housing. HIV, like other chronic illnesses, is a medical condition that is either caused, worsened, or exploited by the conditions of capitalism. Unequal healthcare causes workers to die of illnesses that could be easily treated.

MWPHA members attended a conference of several hundred people at Howard University on "Stigma." Blaming the victim divides the working class, families and isolates people with HIV. This is also racist, as homelessness and illnesses are greater among black and Laitno populations. The existence of capitalism hinges upon reproducing these inequalities. Only working-class unity and militancy can combat the problems of racism and poverty that drive the epidemic. ✪



Demonstrators expose Obama's "promises."

Gov't Aids Bosses' Lockout of Nursing Home Workers

HARTFORD, CT., December 10 — The struggle at four nursing homes owned by Spectrum Health Care continues (see CHALLENGE, 12/1), with the bosses locking out the workers and the city government breaking the picket line.

The strike, which began in April over wages, holidays and harassment of union workers, became a lockout in August when the union, SEIU-affiliated District 1199, agreed to return to work with no conditions attached. However, since then the Park Street facility here has re-called only about 10 workers of the total work-force of 100, an average of three per month, and not according to seniority.

Furthermore, the jobs are far short of the original ones. All but one are per diem; previously most workers had 32- or 40-hour schedules. Both company actions are Unfair Labor Practices. A National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) hearing on Spectrum's many previous Unfair Practices, originally scheduled for November 2, was postponed until January 25. (NLRB decisions are notorious for screwing workers.)

Meanwhile, the City of Hartford has broken the workers' picket line, ordering them off the street, thereby taking the company's side (as all government's generally do). It is now a "stand around."

The City claims salaries for three cops at the picket line is "too expensive" so they've lowered it to two, charged with barring workers from forming a picket line on the street. They must stay on the sidewalk or be subject to arrest.

Last week the CHALLENGE correspondent brought the movie "Salt of the Earth" — about a New Mexico zinc-miners' strike — to the workers. They watched the film with obvious enthusiasm.

Afterwards, standing around the fire barrel on the sidewalk, people were talking about the call-backs. One woman said the company "should call everyone back to work together, just like we went out together."

Another added, "They're trying to split us up."

"Just like in the movie," said the first.

When told that the current CHALLENGE had no article about their struggle, another worker took the paper saying, "That's okay. I like to read other stories, not just about here." ✪

Hospital Bosses Attack Pensions; Philly Rank-and-File Fights Back

PHILADELPHIA, December 13 — Since the 1980's the bosses have been attacking workers' pensions in South America, Africa, and Asia. They have had plenty of practice that they can now use against workers in Europe and the U.S. Philadelphia hospital workers are now facing this same attack.

Bosses' View of Aging Workers: Garbage

What should happen to working people when they are too old or too sick to work anymore? The bosses believe that this is not their problem. Throughout the history of capitalism they have shown that they will use workers to make profits and then discard us like garbage when we are no longer productive.

Capitalism organizes society to make profits for a tiny minority of rich people at the expense of the vast majority of working people. But workers create all wealth. Therefore communists believe we have the right to be taken care of in old age after spending our lives contributing to society. Communism would organize society to fulfill the needs of the working class.

Why then do we have pensions and Social Security in this capitalist society? Only because the labor movement fought for many years to limit the cruelty of the bosses. Social Security was won during the Great Depression of the 1930's because of the violent united struggles of employed and unemployed workers, often under the leadership of the old communist movement.

Unfortunately these battles only reformed the capitalist system instead of doing away with it. Now capitalism is failing again around the world. In order to survive in this competitive world each capitalist must drain as much profit as possible from the workers. They no longer afford to let us have pensions and social security in our old age.

Stocks Down = Pensions Down

Due to layoffs and wage cuts, less money has been going into the pension here. Also, the pension fund lost money on the failing stock market and must be reformed to meet government regulations. The bosses want to stop putting any money into the pension. The Pension Protection Act, a law passed by the fascist Bush, will allow them to do this.

The capitalist labor leaders in 1199c are proposing an eight-point plan which involves concessions to the bosses to keep workers' pensions. This is a losing strategy. These "leaders" made countless concessions to the bosses over the years and the living conditions for the workers have grown steadily worse. If we make concessions to the hospital bosses they will whittle away at the pension until it is gone.

We must fight for our pension and prepare for a strike in 2012! Millions of workers have struck in France against the governments' attack on their pensions. We must have this same fighting spirit. Philly hospital workers are organizing a rank and-file movement to lead this battle.

But even if we win in 2012 we will still be under attack. Workers already won pensions and Social Security many years ago. But because we live in a capitalist society, a dictatorship of the bosses, all of our victories are only temporary. The bosses can always use their control of the government to take back what we win.

If we are ever going to win the true victory, the liberation of the working class, we must fight to get rid of capitalism forever. We must fight for communism, a society that will use the wealth we create to fulfill human needs. We can build a world where the aging workers are respected and cared for after their long years of work; where the young can use their labor to build a bright future rather than to line the pockets of the rich.

Join the Progressive Labor Party in this fight for a better world! ✪

To contact Philly PLP, Call: 267-319-3515

Paris: Undocumented Workers Refuse to Give Up

PARIS, December 8 — Since October 7, 500 mainly African undocumented workers have occupied the History of Immigration Museum here. They're demanding that the government "legalize" them in accordance with the June agreement ending the eight-month strike by 6,000 undocumented workers. As of two weeks ago, 1,864 requests for "legalization" had been filed, but only 58 residence permits had been issued.

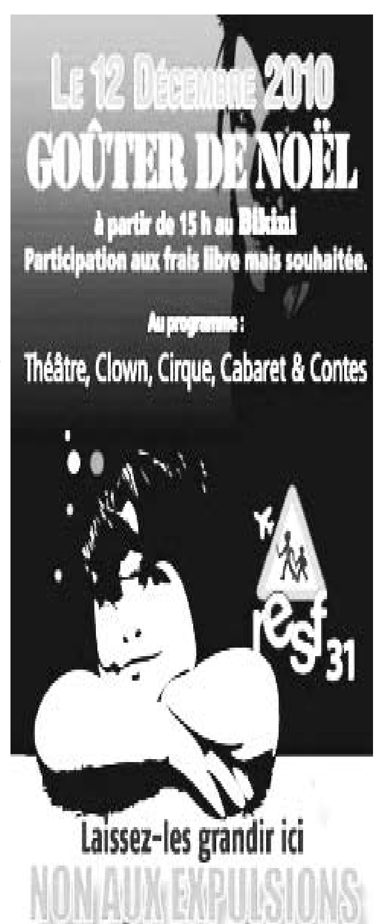
The museum administration has now closed the building to the general public.

Meanwhile, in a show of working-class support for their cause, a December 12 holiday celebration for the children of undocumented workers "together with their friends from school," is being organized by The Education Without Borders Network (RESF). The poster publicizing the event demands: "Let them grow up here. No deportations. Legalization."

The program includes theater, clowns, a circus, a cabaret and story-telling.

The hall is being provided rent-free, the clowns and other performers will be donating their services and RESF will provide a snack.

A special occasion will be the celebration of the recent "legalization" of 20-year-old Yasmina. A very powerful mobilization by the teachers and students at her high school forced the government to cancel her deportation. Yasmina, of Algerian origin, is studying optics at a vocational high school in Toulouse in southern France. ✪



Poster for the holiday celebration for the children of undocumented workers.

France: Union Hacks Beg for Crumbs, Undercut Mass Actions

PARIS, December 8 — Five union confederations with almost 2,000,000 members are calling for nation-wide protests here on December 15, part of a Europe-wide day of demonstrations around the slogan, "No to austerity, priority to jobs and growth in Europe." This reformist slogan hardly challenges the profit system responsible for austerity and unemployment. It hides the fact that under capitalism the bosses' economic growth is based on the exploitation of workers' labor power.

The French union misleaders are begging for crumbs from the bosses, demanding "a fairer sharing-out of wealth" while legitimizing the supposedly "necessary reduction in [budget] deficits."

These union hacks mis-led this Fall's massive anti-retirement reform movement into the dead-end of widely-spaced one-day strikes and protests. However, thousands of rank-and-filers — workers in ports, refineries, transit, trucking, railroad and sanitation — organized extended strikes on their own. They shut the ports and cut off oil deliveries to vast areas of the country, while masses of students backed the movement by shutting hundreds of schools in a vast show of worker-student unity. But the mis-leaders wore out their fighting spirit, enabling the right-wing Sarkozy government to chalk up yet another victory and ram through its pension "reform" law, raising the minimum retirement age.

Many workers here understand the sell-out role of these hacks, but see no alternative to them. It's the job of communists to help build a revolutionary movement that will throw both capitalism and the union honchos into the dustbin of history. ✪

Mexico: PLP Leads Fight vs. Rulers' Threat to Workers' Homes

MEXICO CITY — Over 200 neighbors attended a meeting where members and friends of the Progressive Labor Party (PLP) explained that their neighborhood was sinking. We also discussed the proposal of the investigators from the Universidad Autonoma Metropolitana to implement the Sierra Nevada Project, which supposedly will prevent the area from sinking further. It's been receding one-half meter per year, totaling 15 meters (about 50 feet) so far.

We explained that when the Conagua Water Company approved the Project, it will displace 120,000 area residents.

Faced with the imminent risk of losing their homes, and the lack of interest of local, federal and state authorities, PLP members and friends have exposed the role being played by the University investigators and the politicians to our fellow workers. We've stressed the need to organize ourselves, not only to prevent this threat, but also the importance to rid ourselves of the whole capitalist system. We're struggling with our neighbors to join PLP to fight for a communist system where our well-being is primary and not constantly threatened.

Our Party has confidence that the working class will accept and fight for communist ideas. All our members must fight for these ideas alongside our class brothers and sisters in the reform struggle.

Our organization is strong and we're inspired to do more. The workers have taught us a lesson: they're ready to fight! They're tired of the lies and the betrayal of the politicians and the sellout leaders. It's clear that spreading communist ideas is necessary. The workers are responding by asking for CHALLENGE every time they see us.✪

Bosses Use Religion to Keep Workers Passive, Divided

As you cross the street, a car drives toward you. You have two options: pray the car exists in your imagination and continue walking, or recognize the existence of the car and move out of the way.

We would call the first option idealism, and the second materialism. Idealism means thought came before matter: you think the car is not there, therefore, it is not there. Materialism, however, asserts that the material reality — atoms, molecules, the universe — existed before thought. Wishing will not change the fact that a car is speeding towards you. A thought is a reflection of the material reality. For example, the thumb existed before humans realized its use.

Religion is a Ruling-Class Ideology

All religions are a form of idealism. Religion is a ruling-class ideology used to keep the workers divided, passive, and loyal. It's false consciousness for the workers and a tool of division and genocide for the bosses. It pacifies workers into accepting their oppression as an unchangeable fact of life. Religion rules through fear and guilt: One must please the rulers on earth in order to please the rulers in heaven.

Religion spreads the illusion that when workers aren't able to achieve happiness under capitalism, it is their fault. Religion does not teach us to fight the oppressors, rather to forgive and accept them. In fact, religion vilifies working-class revolution. Thus, even questioning their oppression was a sin. This teaches the workers to be passive and obedient if they are to be "good believers."

Some workers believe we can escape the horrors of capitalism by giving in to God. Praying to Allah, praising Jesus, performing poojahs to Shiva, or being possessed by the spirit loa will not feed the mouths of the hungry, treat illnesses or shelter the homeless. Religion teaches nothing but obedience to authority, the bosses. "Leaving it to god" produces inaction. Workers can then be swayed into tolerating more wars and murder.

Ask yourself this: are the workers in Haiti dying from cholera because god is punishing them or because capitalism creates the conditions for cholera: poverty, unsanitary drinking water, bad healthcare?

Religion Justified Sexism and Racism

Many workers turn to religion to answer the hard questions in life, so the bosses embrace religion to justify capitalism. Religion is the ultimate excuse for sexism, racism and genocide. The systematic killing of women in Jordan in the name of "honor" is deeply tied to patriarchy, which is justified through their religion. In Bangladesh, women are mutilated for allegedly committing adultery or other "dishonorable" acts.

The ruling class has used religion to justify racist acts. Religion has been the vessel of imperialists and expansion. The mass murder of the indigenous peoples in North and South America was justified by their "lack of morals": equality, public ownership of property, and collectivity. Religion was used to excuse slavery in the U.S. and to teach the slaves to "keep their place." These are only a few examples; all ruling classes use religion to authorize conquest and oppression, from the ancient Greeks to the modern age.

Religion cannot End Poverty

In religious thought, we are all supposed to accept and love our masters. It teaches us to be passively exploited, in hopes of a better life in "heaven," while the bosses are happily murdering us here on earth.

Many religious workers see the need to help the poor, and perform works of charity through their churches. But churches won't teach them the cause of poverty. It is not a "natural part of life" but a product of capitalism. Workers are poor mainly because of years of imperialist bosses super-exploiting labor. By seizing natural resources through wars and super-exploiting some workers, the bosses maximize their profits. Religion cannot do away with poverty, only the united workers committed to smashing the ruling class can.

Individualism Inherent in Religion

Some argue morality can only be taught through religion. "Moral deeds" are tied to salvation. If one gives a meal to a homeless person in order to go to heaven, that is an act motivated by individualism. The motivation should be to help meet the needs of the working class, not to enter the private club of God. Workers cannot change the world through the individual acts of charity encouraged by religion, but only by fighting back in unity.

Some workers and students, despite understanding how the bosses use religion to divide and pacify us, want god because it makes them feel good. Marx said, "Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people."

We want to replace the false warmth of a god with the warmth and unity of billions of workers. We are confident that the need for religion will wither away through participation in class struggle. Communism needs no illusions; the love, struggle, and unity of our working brothers and sisters are plenty.

Fight Idealism with Dialectical Materialism

Dialectical materialism is a science explaining the laws of development of nature, society and thoughts. Dialectical materialism teaches us that things are always in motion, interconnected and interdependent and that we can examine their reality. All other philosophies either justified or ignored inequality and class exploitation. Dialectical materialism is the only philosophy that can break the working class away from all chains of exploitation. It is more than just theory; it is also a guide to collective action.

Just as capitalism uses idealist philosophies to stay in power, the working class must use dialectical materialism to analyze and organize. We learn dialectics through practice, not memorization. (See PL website for pamphlet "Jailbreak")

In PLP, we understand that learning and applying the dialectics is as important to our work as having a demonstration. All members and workers must know it. We cannot wait till the day of the revolution to say, "it's time to apply dialectics!"

Dialectics allow us to observe situations objectively, think critically and make changes to our plans. In order to do this, we must fight idealism. We must reveal religion as another dividing tool of oppression.

Communism means having a world run for need, not profit; organized through democratic centralism ("freedom of discussion, unity of action"),decisions made collectively for the needs of the international working-class instead of passively voting for an individual's interests; and using dialectical materialism as the basis of understanding the world around us, not the supernatural.

The genocide of members of the working class, the mutilation of sexes, the oppression of all workers will not end by praying for it. We can live without religion, just as we can live without bosses. The communist revolution led by PLP is the only solution. ✪

Letter: Honor the Memory of Working-Class Heroes

We encourage* all *CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses around the world.

I recently went to Waldheim Cemetery (now known as River Forest Cemetery) in Chicago where many of the Haymarket Martyrs and other revolutionary heroes are buried. There is a large monument that lies over the remains of the workers who were murdered by the bosses for the crime of being revolutionaries. Many were immigrant workers fighting for the eight-hour day and socialism.

Their struggle is remembered every year by millions of workers throughout the world, as Chicago was the birthplace of May Day, our international workers' holiday.

I was last in Waldheim in the sixties when I attended the funerals of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and William Z. Foster. My parents were members of the Communist Party USA for decades and I was raised to honor the heroes of our class.

Although they made many mistakes and many of them abandoned the fight for communism, I think we must look back with great respect and gratitude. The founders of the PLP took the best of what they had learned in the CP and built a new party for the working class.

As Lenin said, we stand on the shoulders of those who went before us. Leaders and members of the CP were dedicated communists who sacrificed and accomplished much. I have tears in my eyes while I write this and I unashamedly cried walking through the section N of Waldheim where the communists are buried. Below are some that mean the most to me.

…Sylvia Wood's family were black sharecroppers in Louisiana. She came to Chicago as a young woman in the 1930's. She led a strike against the bosses and was fired. She met members of the communist party, joined the party and became active. She went to work at Sunbeam on the Westside of Chicago and became the first black steward in the United Electrical workers — a communist-organized and — led union. She fought for multiracial unity and against racism all her life. Sylvia raised the ideas of the CP in her church and in her community till she died in the 1980's.

The 'Rebel Girl'

…Elizabeth Gurley Flynn joined the International Workers of the World in the early 1900's. She led strikes of textile workers in Lawrence, Mass and traveled west to lead class struggle in the mines and factories of Butte, Montana, Seattle and Spokane, Washington, inspiring Joe Hill's song "Rebel Girl." She later joined the CP and became a leader till she died in the 1960's. She was arrested many times and spent nine months in jail during the McCarthy period when she was in her 60's.

…William Z. Foster led strikes of thousands of packinghouse workers and steel workers in 1917 and 1919. He joined and led the CP for many years when his health permitted. He fought against the no-strike sellout by the revisionist leaders of the CP during World War II. He led the fight to oust the revisionist Browder and other misleaders and to make the CP once again a fighting party for the working class. He was always on the left of the party.

…Big Bill Haywood was a fearless leader of the working class throughout the U.S. and was a founder of the International Workers of the World. He led class struggle in the Colorado Labor wars of the 1900's and 1910's. There miners fought the bosses with guns and dynamite.

They defeated the bosses' sheriffs and militia for a time, but were out-gunned by the U.S. army troops protecting the property of the Rockefellers and other capitalists. Big Bill fought against imperialist war, denouncing U.S. bosses for sending workers to fight other workers in World War I. He was convicted by the bosses' injustice system for his anti-war organizing and jumped bail and lived the rest of his life in the revolutionary Soviet Union where he was an advisor to Lenin and other com-

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U.S. Rulers Protected Nazi Murderers

BERLIN, November 22 — Former Nazi death-camp guard Samuel Kunz, who murdered twelve Jews by his own hands and was an accomplice to the brutal murder of no less than 430,000 others, died of old age before his belated trial could begin.

Kunz was conscripted into the Red Army when World War II broke out, but was captured by the Nazis early in the war. When offered by his fascist captors to join their side, this traitor joined the Nazi SS and collaborated with the worst scum of humanity out of his own free will. He served his fascist masters as a guard at the Trawinki and Belzac death-camps and took part in the massacre of hundreds of thousands of Jews.

Unfortunately, at the end of the war, Kunz was captured by the U.S. military, who quickly released him without trial. If he had been caught by the Red Army, he would have been shot for his treason and his horrible war-crimes.

After the war, Kunz lived in the open as a minor government official in West Germany for no less than sixty-five years (!) without facing trial; he was charged with war crimes only in July 2010, and now he managed to die of old age without ever being punished for murdering 12 people and being an accessory to the murder of 430,000 others.

Kuntz is not the only Nazi war criminal who has evaded justice while living in West Germany, which was a U.S. client-state. The post-war West German government administration was saturated with ex-Nazi war criminals who, for the most part, were never prosecuted. The same goes for the U.S., where a significant number of Ukrainian collaborators with the Nazis, among other Nazi war criminals, found shelter.

The CIA also employed the "services" of several Nazi murderers who were considered "experts" in anti-communism. In contrast, Soviet military courts and the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), despite all their mistakes and their state-capitalist nature after 1956, did their best to bring the Nazi war criminals they could catch to justice.

This is the face of the bosses' "democracy" and the bosses' "justice": allowing mass-murderers to live freely in the open and die a natural death from old age without paying for their crimes. Worse still, they worked for the capitalist West German administration while their victims' blood was still fresh on their hands!

The Progressive Labor Party fights for the workers' communist justice, which will mean that fascists, exploiters and war criminals will pay dearly for their crimes! ✪

Letter: Honor the Memory of Working Class Heroes

continued from p. 6

munists till he died in 1928 in Russia.

There were many other graves, with hammer and sickles on the headstones, of communists who fought in the Spanish Civil War and of workers who were "fighters for the international working class their entire lives." The contributions of these communists and millions of others throughout the U.S. and the world laid the basis for the emergence of the PLP.

A Long-range Struggle

We have much to learn, much to do. We know we are part of a great history; communists fought and won battles against the bosses long before we were born. Communists will fight great battles long after we are gone. U.S. communists organized the industrial unions (read: "Labor's Untold Story") and organized black and white workers in fascist conditions in the 1930's and 1940's in the South (read: "Hammer and Hoe"). Many died and many were jailed but they fought on.

They fought so that future generations would live in a society run by and for workers. They didn't live to see that day and some of us won't either. What the communists who are buried in Waldheim did counts. They advanced the fight for commuinism. We honor them and have learned from their accomplishments and their failures. As I grow older I become ever more confident that our Party and our class will honor the memory of communists by learning how to build an international party of millions.

Long Live Communism,

Red Diaper Red

(Wikipedia has a page on Waldheim and entries for a number of the communists and left workers buried there.)



RED EYE ON THE NEWS

Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly, LAT=Los Angeles Times

Fascism, based on racism, grows

GW, 11/26 — US politics has always been steeped in race, and racism has always been a political and electoral force. The…scars of centuries are not removed as a result of one person being elected. Indeed, if the racial polarization of the electorate in the midterms is anything to go by, they may have deepened and have been made even more raw as a result of it.

For the poorest 90% of US families — the overwhelming majority of whom are white — social mobility has stalled...

The US may have been one of the principal motors of neoliberal globalization, but its citizens are also its victims. In the absence of any vehicle for international class solidarity, threats of outsourcing…provide the material basis for a…loathing of foreigners.

To the sting of economic vulnerability has been added the indignity of geopolitical decline. As the sole global superpower, the US would once have been able to rig the competition with carrots, sticks, and if need be, B52s. Now it must accept that Indians, Chinese, Brazilians and others can also change the rules.

Add to this the failed wars against predominantly Muslim countries…, a broken immigration system and projections that non-white will be a majority by 2042, and you have the basis of a race-based backlash.

Liberal economics: a cruel myth

GW, 12/3 — This economist…argues that, in the neoliberal form…it is the market that defines our choices… Make the wrong choices and you will be punished. But what makes this so savage is that it takes no account of how some people are much better equipped than others to make good choices.

Terrible options are the reality for a growing proportion of the population… These are the millions whose jobs are insecure, who have limited access to secure housing, and who juggle jobs and childrearing in a frantic effort to keep up.

The neatness of neoliberal utilitarianism is that it…flatters individuals that they are in control… All that is asked of you is to find happiness…And the feedback loop insists that happiness is perfectly attainable, just within your reach as long as you keep trying to find it. It's a cruel mythology.

Mexico institutions wildly abusive

NYT, 12/1 — Ten years ago, a human rights group released a scathing, groundbreaking report on abusive, decrepit conditions in Mexican institutions for the mentally and physically disabled....In a new report…a yearlong investigation revealed "atrocious and abusive conditions" that included lobotomies performed without consent, children missing from orphanages, widespread filth, squalor, and a lack of medical care.

Eric Rosenthal, director of Disability Rights International…said: "I have witnessed abuses as atrocious as these in the psychiatric facilities and orphanages of some other countries…"

…Many of those in the institutions did not need to be there, but as "abandonados" lacked family members or community-based programs to care for them…At orphanages, the team found that children were unaccounted for… "Some of these children may have been subject to sex trafficking and forced labor."

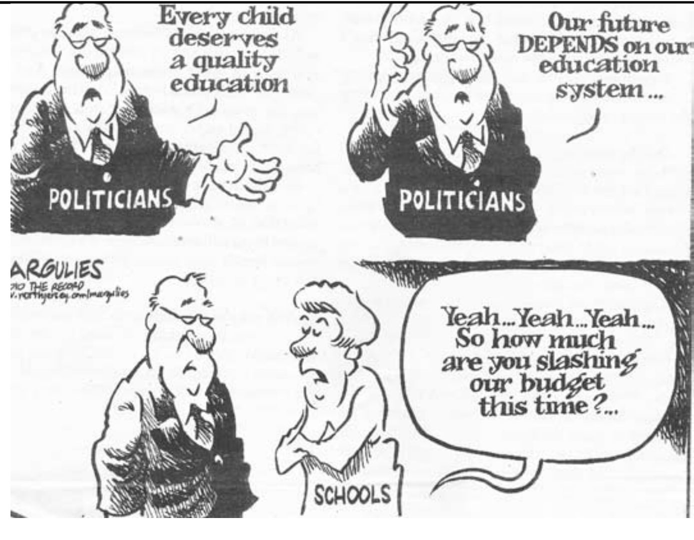
Poverty drops school-kids down

NYT, 11/28 — To the editor: ….Explanation for why the United States lags behind: poverty....

Poverty means poor nutrition, substandard health care, environmental toxins and little access to books, all of which have a strong negative effect…

Students need to reach workers

GW 12/10 — While students can be the spark for the broader struggles ahead, history tells us that they are unlikely to be the flame itself. Students and the young might be the most likely to protest, but they…cannot withdraw their labour to any devastating effect… French students in 1968 bolstered the confidence of factory workers. The threat British students pose — much like the financial crisis bringing them on to the streets — is of contagion. That their energy, enthusiasm, militancy, rage and raucousness might burn in us all.



Migrants are enslaved worldwide

GW, 11/26 — Governments are prioritizing temporary work that leaves migrants without rights, according to the Council of Global Unions… A typical programme agreed by Canada and Guatemala: "Under this agreement the authorities of the host country keep the passports of migrants, who are not allowed to contact or even approach trade unions. Nor may they look for other work… they have no rights."

…Workers from Pakistan, the Philippines or Sri Lanka taking jobs in Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait or Bahrain are tied to their employer… "Outside this relationship workers have no legal existence, with scope for all sorts of abuse."

Rich have inside track to jobs

GW, 12/10 — A report…suggests that (surprise, surprise) it's not what you know, but who you know that helps youngsters get into the most popular positions. Informational recruitment by word of mouth is particularly important in creative industries such as advertising, architecture, design and journalism. And social networking, as we now must call it, is much more effective among the affluent. It's another way in which they can screw the poor.

MORE ITEMS AVAILABLE AT WWW.PLP.ORG

Haiti: Debate Unionism and Communism

Recently some PLP'ers met with trade-unionist friends from Haiti. We learned of the bosses' and government's vicious assault against their unions struggling for legal recognition and collective bargaining. Despite laws protecting labor rights, organizers and union members in private and state-run industries — printers, bus drivers, clerical workers, teachers — have been fired wholesale for organizing and joining unions and for striking.

To fight back, these militant and determined workers have formed a confederation of honest unions (what they call "red" unions, as opposed to the pro-boss/government "yellow" unions). Many members of these unions are jobless but are staying together and holding firm, a living example of how to fight unemployment collectively.

They fight through legal channels, administrative proceedings, petitioning the government, public meetings and forums, through publicizing their demands in the media, and through street demonstrations. They're also allied with radical student organizations who support their demands, and whom they support when the authorities attack them (such as, expelling militant students).

PLP has been giving practical and political support to these workers and students and will continue to do so. But we're also struggling with them — even as we support their fight to establish unions — to think beyond trade unionism, to organize for communism.

The Contradictions Within Unions

We believe unions have two contradictory aspects. They're a necessary defensive weapon of workers under capitalism, and with honest and especially communist leadership, they can lead major struggles against the bosses' constant drive to increase the rate of exploitation and maximize their profit from our labor.

But conversely, unions accept and adapt to capitalism as the price they pay for legal recognition and binding contracts. Laws restrict unions, preventing them from going outside the laws established by the bosses' government.

The first "contract" bargained by unions is the unspoken agreement to obey the laws and not attack capitalism's foundations. Unions not holding to this devil's bargain soon lose their legal standing and recognition. One reason our union friends in Haiti have such trouble winning recognition may be that the imperialist and local bosses and their government fear workers' potential for carrying union struggles "too far," outside the limits of pro-capitalist unionism.

What the Bosses Fear

This potential looks more dangerous to these bosses because of the oppressive conditions in Haiti, starting with more than 70% unemployment and lacking the most basic necessities of life. An honest union, leading angry workers like those in the camps, with nothing to lose, could indeed be something to fear.

In effect, unions that obey the pro-capitalist social contract are submitting to the bosses' social control of the workers' struggles, keeping them within the bounds of capitalist law, preventing them from unleashing the full power and creative energy of a united, militant working class. Unions tend to focus inward on their own members rather than on the interests of the entire working class.

Even where union confederations lead massive strikes, as in Europe recently, or in Guadeloupe, their protests are limited in scope (no matter how militant), with no plan for open-ended, direct, insurrectionary action by an aroused working class.

The union leaderships — with very few exceptions — go along with capitalism's limits on unions. In most cases, union leaders have a cushy life, far from the rigors of wage work, with salaries far higher than their members' wages. In many cases they're conscious agents of the bosses, collaborating with them to lower wages and eliminate workers in concessionary contracts. Leaders of major unions are often incorporated directly into ruling-class organizations (as are the "yellow" union leaders in Haiti), and their patriotic flag-waving supports the rulers in their rivalry with foreign bosses.

In general, communists think the negative aspect of trade unionism tends to become primary, especially in the absence of communist leadership. While we fight to make unions more effective defenders of the workers, we recognize that left to themselves, over time, unions will act as a conservative brake on workers' struggles.

It's difficult to keep this contradictory nature of unions firmly in mind. But illusions about the radical potential of unionism will hold back workers' understanding of the class struggle and how to organize to fight it better. A communist party and its aim to overthrow capitalism is the fundamental need of the working class. This can never come from a trade-unionist strategy, contenting itself with fighting for limited demands within the system.

A few unionists in Haiti see the need for a revolutionary party and movement to bypass the strategic limitations of trade unionism and carry the workers' fight to a higher level. Some look to Castro and Chavez and other South American social-democratic regimes for leadership and support, although the response hasn't been encouraging.

When trying to affiliate with Chavez's party, for example, they were told they "should cooperate with the Préval government," with which Chavez has cordial relations. (They dropped this affiliation after that, because it's the Préval government that's been attacking their unions!)

Similarly, at a teachers' forum on the Cuban revolution, when a Cuban embassy speaker was asked why Cuba didn't criticize the Brazilian government for supplying the largest contingent of troops in the repressive UN peacekeeping force, she replied that this was a Haitian "internal matter" and she would have no comment. All the ALBA (Bolivarian Alliance for the Americas) countries are more interested in state-to-state relations with countries like Haiti than in supporting radical workers and students fighting against their own government. So that strategy is a dead end.

The debate continues…. PLP, an international revolutionary communist party, can grow in countries like Haiti. A principled, protracted ideological struggle with our friends there and elsewhere is the condition of this growth. As our friendship deepens, it becomes comradeship, and comrades are people who struggle with one another.

The road to revolution strips us of all illusions in capitalist institutions, whether unions or universities. Together we will learn how to develop the communist analysis of existing conditions, how to conduct the bitter struggles that loom ahead for the working class, and how to envision and create the egalitarian world of comrades we need. ✪

Rally at Haitian Consulate, 271 Madison Ave. (near 39th St.) Friday, December 17, 5 PM



Workers in Haiti Rebel Over Oppression, Not Elections

NEW YORK CITY, December 13 — The bosses' media says the rebellion in Haiti is only about rival presidential candidates urging their supporters to take to the streets. It's true the politicians are fighting over control of the expected $10 billion in reconstruction funds. The U.S., the real ruler of Haiti, is backing the U.N. forces repressing the rebels while deciding which of its puppets to support and how to make the election seem legitimate.

REBELLION IS JUSTIFIED!

But people's anger is really exploding over unmet needs: housing, food, health, schools, jobs. They hate the U.S. imperialists responsible for their misery. They hate the violent repression by the UN occupation force whom they blame for starting the cholera epidemic, with a lot of backing from scientific reports. Most people don't much care which politician fronts for the U.S. in the ruins of Haiti, while only 0.1% of U. S. "aid" has arrived. They are rebelling against an intolerable daily life.

In such conditions to rebel is justified. We support the rebels in Haiti, and also the rebellious students in Britain and the rest of Europe, while here in the U.S. we fight racist unemployment, foreclosures, school and hospital closings, budget cuts, tuition hikes, anti-immigrant racism, and endless wars for oil and U.S. world domination. Enough is enough!

Fight-backs like these support our struggles across borders so we will all be stronger. Students in Haiti wrote letters supporting an arrested student at Bronx Community College. In turn, we are rallying to support our sisters and brothers rebelling in the streets of Haiti. ✪

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